



UNIVERSITY
BAPTIST CHURCH

UBC NEWS

CELEBRATING 175 YEARS
JANUARY 2026

**1219 University Ave SE
Minneapolis MN 55414**

Established 1850 at St. Anthony Falls, MN

From the Pastor

Lean into the Gospel of liberation, justice, and truthfulness

December 2025 in the Twin Cities will be remembered as filled with ICE raids and protests in the streets. People were disappeared and brutally kidnapped by masked agents claiming to be law enforcement.



And the people of the Twin Cities rose up. In the bitter cold, they blew whistles. Group texts mobilized trained observers to go to the sites of the kidnappings. They pulled out their phones and recorded the illegal and unconstitutional actions of the "officers." They made sure they got the names of those detained so their family and friends could hopefully find them. They outnumbered the masked agents by ten times.

They took lessons learned in Minneapolis after George Floyd's murder that community activism and transparency really do make a difference. And they probably helped prevent the next wave of detentions.

I can't help but see the parallels with the nativity stories in Matthew and Luke. The Holy Family had no place to stay, so they made do with a humble cattle stall. Then when Herod escalated his attack on the Hebrew people, they joined the refugee caravan to Egypt. I wonder how many Romans helped smuggle

people to safety, just as God smuggled God's self into a refugee's womb.

What are the implications for us as we seek to be healthy and responsible Christians in this new year?

I'm encouraged by the number of people who have emerged from this bleak midwinter, clinging onto each other and the liberating story of the Gospel. May we lean into the Gospel of liberation, justice, and truthfulness in this New Year. May it change us. May we remember that we are never alone.

Blessings and Peace,

Doug Donley

January Worship Schedule

Worship Theme:
"Faithfulness: Then and Now"

January 4

Preaching: Doug Donley

Sermon: "Light"

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12 Isaiah 60:1-6

Worship Leader: Paula Moyer

Ushers: Chris Follett & Terri Wottrich

January 11

Preaching: Doug Donley

Sermon: "Jesus, the Immigrant"

Scripture: Matthew 2:13-23

Worship Leader: Violet Butler

Ushers: Joel Delikowski & Trish Donley

January 18

Joint Service at First Congregational Church, 500 SE 8th Ave

Preaching: Doug Donley

Sermon: "Imagine Healing our Broken World"

Scripture: John 1:29-42

January 25

Preaching: Doug Donley

Sermon: "The Economy of God"

Scripture: Mark 1:14-15

Worship Leader: Deidre Druk

Ushers: Trish Donley & Gene Velasco



JANUARY FORUMS

Forums are held 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m., after coffee time. We do our best to provide a Zoom option for remote participants.

January 4–Sanctuary party to take down the Christmas tree and decorations

Enjoy the last of our holiday treats (bring any you'd like to share!) while we take down the tree and pack away our sanctuary decorations until next year. See also page 4.

January 11–Hymn sing / evaluation

This will be the last opportunity to sing a bunch of hymns from our 1983 blue hymnal and give your feedback. A task force is busy tabulating results from surveys completed during worship and two previous forums in our grant-supported effort to envision a music supplement to UBC worship. We have been evaluating hymns as to whether we want to keep them, and if so, identifying changes we want to make. There are not enough Sundays in the year to sing all 160 in regular worship—thus, the forums. Please come ready to sing!

January 18–Telling our UBC story

On the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday Sunday, we will worship with our friends at First Congregational Church, who are just beginning their 175th anniversary year. For the forum, we will tell our UBC story to our friends at First Church. Next month, they will tell theirs when they worship with us at UBC.

January 25–Mid-year budget review

This is our time to check on how our budget is faring and provide feedback on any adjustments that may be needed. Treasurer Denise Roy will facilitate.

January Calendar

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3
				Office Closed		9 a.m. Bible Study
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10 a.m. Worship Communion 11:15 a.m. Coffee time and take down the decorations/tree 11:45 a.m. Forum/Journeys		11:15 am Meals on Wheels 5:30 p.m. Sacred Harp 7 p.m. Memoirs	11 a.m. Handcraft Group 11:15 am Meals on Wheels 6 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m. Bells	11:15 am Meals on Wheels 6:30 p.m. Caregiver Support	11:15 am Meals on Wheels	9 a.m.-3 p.m. Work Day 1 p.m. Book Group
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Coffee Time 11:45 a.m. Forum/Journeys 1 p.m. Worship Planning 4 p.m. Sacred Harp		5:30 p.m. Sacred Harp 7 p.m. Anti-racism Work	6 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m. Bells		11 a.m. Every Meal	9 a.m. Bible Study
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10 a.m. <i>Worship at First Church</i> Bells Play		5:30 p.m. Sacred Harp 7 p.m. Memoirs	6 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m. Bells			10 a.m. Spanish Conv. 1 p.m. Card Club
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
10 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Coffee Time 11:45 a.m. Forum/Journeys 4 p.m. Sacred Harp <i>Newsletter deadline</i>		5:30 p.m. Sacred Harp	6 p.m. Choir 7:30 p.m. Bells			

What's Going On



Sunday Morning Worship

10 a.m. - Worship in the UBC sanctuary

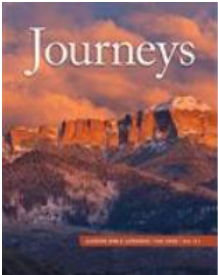
10 a.m. - Or join via livestream on the [UBC YouTube](#) channel (search University Baptist Church Minneapolis MN).

When the livestream has ended - Joys & Concerns (on Zoom)

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID 839 4725 7444 passcode 257750

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83947257444?pwd=cFZCWEdqUkR0RDgwT0JwT3hrQ3FpUT09>

11:15 a.m. Coffee time in the lounge followed by forum (use Zoom link above)



11:45 a.m. Journeys Bible Study in the Char Follett Library. Our meeting is an opportunity to read Scripture together, to learn something new, to ask questions, and to talk about your faith. No preparation is required. Please feel free to come once or regularly. See Nancy Myers or Diane Ehr for more information.

January 4 - Incarnation: John 1:1-18

January 11 - Restoration: Isaiah 43:1-7

January 18 - Spiritual Gifts: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

January 25 - Love: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13



Bible Study—January 3 & 17 (1st & 3rd Saturday), 9 a.m. We will continue to discuss Luke 14-15. New and occasional members are always welcome. No special background, skill, or preparation is required. If you have questions, please contact Diane Ehr at dianeehr82@gmail.com.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 517 697 6753 Passcode: 602794

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5176976753?pwd=NG15ZlNlYDcwUElzTWFMZlRyZm5OQT09>

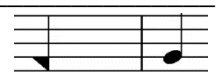
Tree and Sanctuary Undecorating Party - Sunday, January 4, 11 a.m. Please join us after the morning service to take down the banners and put away the tree decorations. Many hands make quick work! Coffee time will be in the sanctuary. Bring your left-over treats!



Meals on Wheels—January 6-9 (Tuesday-Friday first full week of the month)

Meals are picked up around 11:15 a.m. and the route in SE Minneapolis usually takes less than two hours. We're always looking for substitute drivers. If you have questions, please contact Marie LaFrance at marielafance46@gmail.com.

Sacred Harp Singing—Tuesdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m. and Sundays (2nd & 4th), 4-6 p.m. at UBC in Room 303. No experience or talent necessary!



fa

sol

More of What's Going On



Memoir Writing Group–January 6 & 20 (every other Tuesday), 7 p.m. Prompts include *Firsts*, and *Who is your ideal reader (as opposed to your inner critic)?* or whatever you feel called to write about. If you have questions, please contact Trish Donley at 612-386-2856 or patricia.donley63@gmail.com.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 517 697 6753 Passcode: 602794

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5176976753?pwd=NG15ZlNlYkRwUElzMWFmLzRyZm50OQT09>

UBC-FCC Daytime Handcraft Group–January 7 (1st Wednesday), 11 a.m. at Jean Lubke's home. If you are interested and want to be on a distribution list, please let Marilyn Burns (from FCC) know at mbsnoobear@mac.com.



Bells and Choir Rehearsal–Wednesday evenings in the church sanctuary or lounge. Please see the calendar on page 3 for the current rehearsal schedule.

Caregiver Support Group–January 8 (Usually the 1st Thursday), 6:30 p.m.

UBCers who care for a parent, family member, or friend meet for support. If you have questions, please contact Chris Follett at chris2828@yahoo.com

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID 829 0006 6861 Passcode 942930

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82900066861?pwd=RUQ1eGhYN1RzWTJCR0VTNG1JNFVsUT09>

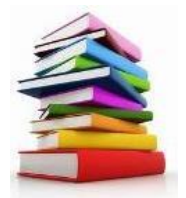


Clean-up Day at UBC–Saturday, January 10, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Come prepared to clean, organize, patch, or paint a few rooms that will be rented out in the near future. Bring work gloves, wear ratty old clothes and comfy shoes. It may get dusty in some areas as we prepare to paint, bring a mask if you like. Childcare and food will be provided. If you have questions, please contact Robbie Steele at rsteale651@comcast.net or 612-877-2257. A second work day is scheduled for February 7.

Grace in Contemporary Literature by Women Book Group–January 10 (2nd Saturday), 1 p.m. The book this month is *Where Rivers Part* by Kao Kalia Yang. If you have questions, please contact Chris Follett at chris2828@yahoo.com.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 517 697 6753 Passcode: 602794

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5176976753?pwd=NG15ZlNlYkRwUElzMWFmLzRyZm50OQT09>



UBC Anti-Racism Work–Tuesday, January 13, 7 p.m. Join us as we look ahead to this year's activities and priorities. All are welcome!

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5176976753?pwd=NG15ZlNlYkRwUElzMWFmLzRyZm50OQT09>

More of What's Going On



Every Meal–January 16 (2nd Friday), 11:15 a.m.-1 p.m. at Marcy Arts Elementary School in SE Minneapolis. Volunteers are needed to deliver meal bags to student backpacks. If you are interested, please contact Denise Roy at denise.roy@mitchellhamline.edu

Spanish Conversation Group–January 24 (4th Saturday), 10 a.m. at First Congregational Church, 500 SE 8th Ave. Join folks from UBC and First Congregational Church to practice your Spanish. If you have questions, please contact Deidre Druk at deidredruk@aol.com.



Card Club–Saturday, January 24, 1 p.m. at Jean Lubke's home. This group meets monthly to learn card-making techniques, share ideas, and make beautiful greeting cards. Due to the limited space and the need to prepare materials, registration is needed for each month's session. If you are interested, please contact Jean at jeanlubke01@gmail.com or 651-295-7525.

Mark Your Calendar

February 7 – Work day

February 15 – Joint service with FCC at UBC

UBC calendars

UBC has a new calendar featuring 12 months of UBC's corner signs. They are available for \$20.

UPCOMING ROOTS CELLAR CONCERTS

Sunday, February 22, 7 p.m.

Katie Dahl/Hope Dunbar/Rj Cowdery

Saturday, March 14, 7 p.m.

Root River Jam

Saturday, April 11, 7 p.m.

Crys Matthews

THRIVE and Alliance of Baptists gatherings: early-bird registration deadline January 5!

UBC is part of the THRIVE racial-justice cohort in the Alliance of Baptists. The spring gathering this year will be in Evanston, Illinois–THRIVE April 14-16, and the Alliance April 16-19. Pastor Doug will attend and others are invited to attend in person or online to be part of this important work. For more information:

<https://allianceofbaptists.org/ag26> and <https://allianceofbaptists.org/thrive/>, and talk to Pastor Doug or Denise Roy.

Holiday baking with UBC youth and families

On December 15, UBC children and families mixed, baked, and decorated holiday cookies in the big kitchen downstairs at church. They made some wonderful creations that they contributed to the potluck at the decorating party the next Sunday.

Photos by Laura Justin

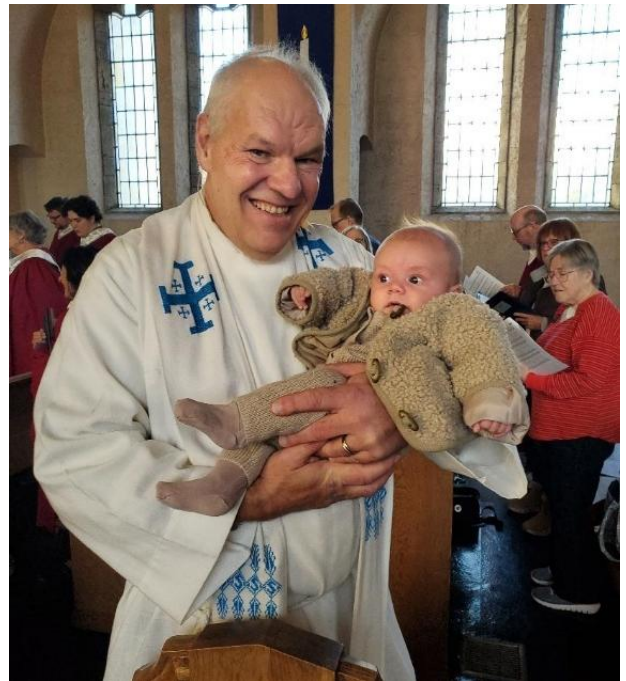


Welcome, baby August!



Augustus Thomas MacAulay Beier, born August 27, was dedicated during the Sunday service on December 21 by his parents, Katie MacAulay and Jacob Beier, and surrounded by family members. During the hymn "How Firm a Foundation," Pastor Doug carried baby August down the aisle to meet the smiling members of the community, who welcomed him with joy to our congregational life.

Photos by Chris Follett



Changing the Sanctuary from Advent to Christmas

After worship on December 21, almost everybody stayed for a potluck lunch and then helped to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. This year, the new blue flags made by Karole and Robbie stayed up, but we still needed ladders to trim the magnificent Christmas tree. Solstice sunlight streamed in the windows. Kevin Branting and Kim Donley played hymns and carols on the piano to cheer on the workers. An hour later, the tree was lit, the candelabra full of tall new candles, windows adorned with candles and greens, hand candles and printed programs ready in the narthex, and costumes laid out for children to participate in the Nativity lesson.



David Lesniaski directed the choir anthem during the service. *Photo by Chris Follett*

Pastor Doug and Claire reached the high spots on the tree as Andrew and Peter assisted.

Photo by Laura Justin

It took five people to staple and fold the Christmas Eve programs!

Photo by Trish Donley



Oh, Holy Night

On Wednesday, December 24, as the sun set just after 4:30, the beautiful musical prelude began in the UBC sanctuary, where white poinsettias surrounded the empty manger. Usher Chris lit the candles in the windows, and the pews began to fill. From 5 to 6 p.m., the Christmas story was told in lessons and carols, complete with the Nativity story enacted by children and other members of the congregation. Kim Donley led worship and Pastor Doug spoke about parallels between the times of Jesus' birth and the times in which we find ourselves today. The service ended with the candlelight medley of carols, closing with "Silent Night." It was a night of beauty, hope, and joy.

Photos by Chris Follett



Kim Donley played the hammer dulcimer.



The UBC Choral and soloists made a mighty joyful noise under the direction of David Lesniaski.

Holy Night, continued



The manger scene players were Otto as the Roman tax man, Peter as a stable animal, Ben as a wise man, the Frasers as the Holy Family, and Finn and Gayla as angels.

Photo by Chris Follett

Silent Night sung by
candlelight.

Photo by Gayla Marty



Stories from Our History

University Baptist Church Fire, January 13, 1970

By Harriet Johnson

It was a bitterly cold January night in Minnesota. Cork and I were sleeping soundly under mounds of covers when the phone rang persistently at 3 a.m. to wake us. Cork reached over to the phone, groggily answered, and then sat up quickly. It was the minister of our church calling him.



"There's been a fire at the church", he spoke urgently, "and I need you to go over there to the building right away." We lived within six blocks of the church and the minister lived in the suburbs. "They have put out the fire, but the Fire Marshall needs an official or church member to walk through with him and verify that the fire is out and sign the papers so the crew can leave. Could you please go over there?"

Cork agreed to help out and pulled on his warmest sweat pants and sweater, spread the covers over me, and tiptoed down the stairs to go to the car. I fell back to sleep, knowing that the fire was out and he would be back soon to our warm bed.

Later at about 5 a.m. I heard the back door slam and his steps as he went down to the basement where he left all his outer smoky clothes. I was happy he was back home again on such a cold night. But it was a different story when he came to our bedroom and neared our bed. The intense acrid smell of recent fire that he brought with him was terrible. Even though he had left most of his clothes in the basement, there was an overwhelming cloud of smoky smell that surrounded him.

"You can't get into bed with me," I protested, "You stink! Go take a shower with lots of soap and shampoo before you come back." The chastened hero slunk off to the bathroom before he came back to warm up. He had done a lot for the church

and community but his welcome home was provisional at first. Later the whole family gave him hugs for all he had bravely done on such a cold, cold night and we thanked him profusely.

When Sunday rolled around later, there was a good crowd at the Sunday morning service in the part of the building that had been saved from the fire which had ravaged the other end. The members were very concerned about the extent of the damage, and a large number of them came to the church even on a very cold Sunday to inspect the building. After the service they were led in a careful line through the burned-out part of the building, which still smelled strongly, to view the charred walls, damaged ceilings, and burned interiors to the Student Lounge, Library, and student classrooms. It was a sobering view and everyone recognized it would require extensive repair and renovation, and they worried about the insurance that would cover the costs.

The story was shared about the cause of the fire. It seems it had started in some electrical part of a TV that was left on in the corner of the room that is now the lounge. It had smoldered away in the empty church until the real flames burst out late at night. A University student going home down University Avenue at 1:30 a.m. saw the flames through the windows that overlooked the street and called the Fire Department. They came quickly and managed to put it out before it spread to the sanctuary. The congregation was grateful to the unknown student and to the Fire Department, which had managed to save their church from total destruction.

According to 1970 UBC Annual Report, the damage amounted to nearly \$40,000 building damage and \$5,000 in property damage. In addition, \$9,000 was spent to clean the smoke and dust from walls and floor throughout the building.

Financial Secretary's Report

We are half way through our fiscal year and as expected, our pledge income has rebounded and then some as some folks pay their entire pledge at the end of the year. Rental income continues to lag behind expectations and Patrick is working on some collections.

The Give to the Max campaign in November netted us over \$4,700. Thanks to all who donated! We are always looking at new and creative ways to raise funds. If you have any ideas, please see Jean Lubke.

In addition to the regular distribution, the Foundation contribution includes funds to cover the facilities supervisor and marketing positions.

Operating Income 2025-26	%	Budget	Expected	Received	Over (short)
Pledge Income	47	\$207,933	\$103,967	\$129,070	\$25,103
Rental Income	18	\$80,000	\$40,000	\$37,714	(\$2,286)
Misc income*	7	\$31,500	\$15,750	\$12,343	(\$3,407)
Subtotal		\$319,433	\$159,717	\$179,126	\$19,410
Foundation Contribution	27	\$118,811		-	
Total Operating Income	100	\$438,244			

We received \$1,043 for the November/December special offering for organizations addressing justice issues.

- Chris Follett, Financial Secretary

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR January/February American Baptist Churches USA

Our outreach mission focus for January and February is for ministries within the ABCUSA that are not already receiving funds through the UBC budget. This includes Retired Ministers and Missionaries Fund and One Great Hour of Sharing. Thank you for your help in supporting these important national ministries.

You can drop your designated offering in the offering plate, send a check to the church, designate a gift directly from your bank, or use our online portal for giving on the UBC website, www.UBCmn.org.

Thank you for your ongoing outreach support!!

*Kim Donley and Karole Graham,
Outreach Team Co-Coordiators*

2025-26 UBC Wish List

These are items that don't fit in the budget but would be really nice to have. Please contact Financial Secretary Chris Follett if you would like to donate toward these items.

1. A big welcoming banner on the northwest side of the building visible to people driving or walking on University Avenue (\$300)
2. Upgrade or replacement of our playground equipment
3. New bell-table covers (\$3,000)
4. Wiring and electric stoves for apartment and lounge kitchen (\$6,000)
5. New furniture (couch, chairs, etc.) for nursery (\$3,000)
6. Additional benches under the crab apple tree (\$2,500)



January Birthdays

- 1** Pat Mavity
- 11** Kenny Wottrich
- 14** Jahmai Walton
- 15** Jim Moravek, Josie Mavity
- 20** Nancy Osborne
- 22** Luisa Garmers
- 23** Jim Ross
- 24** Anne Johnson
- 25** Otto Lubke
- 26** Sue Wester
- 27** Dorcal Berbed Espinoza Arbizú
- 30** Lynnette Fraser

January Anniversary

- 30** Anielka Montiel & Francisco Diaz

UBC Social Media: A Lot to Like!



Are you following UBC on Facebook and Instagram? If not, look us up and hit that follow button! And while you're at it, would you please "like" the posts you see? In addition, give a thumbs up to our videos on YouTube and subscribe to the [UBC channel](#).

The algorithm behind what social media shows you operates with a bit of a snowball effect: the more likes a post gets, the more feeds it will show up in. Next time you see a post from UBC, give it a like so that more people can see the great work we do here!



Scan this QR code to be directed to our web page where there are a variety of causes to donate to.

From the Pastor: Thank you so much for the generous monetary gifts you gave to me and the rest of the UBC staff. I feel truly humbled and blessed to serve alongside the good people of UBC.

UBC NEWS

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Rev. Douglas M. Donley, Pastor

Please send contributions by

the 25th of the month to

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